

**HOWARD KIMELDORF INTERVIEWS FOR *REDS OR RACKETS*?**  
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**JACK MOWREY OF LOCAL 8**

**INTERVIEWEE:** JACK MOWREY

**INTERVIEWERS:** HOWARD KIMELDORF

**SUBJECTS:** ILWU LOCAL 6; INDUSTRIAL WORKERS OF THE WORLD; INTERNATIONAL LONGSHOREMEN'S ASSOCIATION; JOSEPH P. RYAN; HARRY BRIDGES; JIMMY HERMAN; KOREAN WAR; UNION ELECTIONS; 1922 PORTLAND WATERFRONT STRIKE; 1934 WEST COAST WATERFRONT STRIKE; RED-BAITING; WORKING CONDITIONS BEFORE 1934; RADICALISM; PORTLAND LONGSHORE; SAN FRANCISCO WATERFRONT

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[00:00:00] **HOWARD KIMELDORF:** December twenty-first. And your name is spelled J-A-C-K? M-O-W-R-Y?

[00:00:14] **JACK MOWREY:** M-O-W-R-E-Y.

[00:00:16] **HOWARD:** Oh, M-O-W-R-E-Y. Okay, Jack Mowrey, okay.

Why don't you begin by telling me the year you came on the Waterfront? And why you came there, and what working conditions were like in those days?

[00:00:33] **JACK:** I came on the Waterfront in 1916 in the month of August. And I came from Japan on the English ships. England was already in the war at that time. And we planned, me and my partner, we planned in Japan when we got on the ship we planned to get off in some Northwest port. Because the ship we were on was going to England, picking up a bunch of wood for airplanes, and we wasn't going to go because we'd be [pressed] into the English Navy. Merchant Marine Navy. So we decided—we jumped the ship when we hit St. Helens [Oregon] , and there was a bar there and run by a Dane, and my partner was a Dane, and he made up with us. There was a Danish outfit up in the woods so we'd have a place to stay for a couple of months.

So we jumped a ship that night and took all the little belongings we had and went out there in the woods and stayed there for two months while they were looking for us. Well, not two months but while the ship was there. And when the ship sailed away, we came back down and we started working on the Waterfront as extras.

[00:01:53] **HOWARD:** That was in 1916, here in Portland?

[00:01:56] **JACK:** 1916. St. Helens.

[00:01:57] **HOWARD:** So, oh St. Helens.

[00:01:58] **JACK:** St Helens, Oregon.

[00:01:59] **HOWARD:** So you were a sailor before that, is that correct?

[00:02:01] **JACK:** Oh yes, I was a sailor. I went to sea when I was ten years old.

[00:02:04] **HOWARD:** Ten years old? [incredulous] How did you do that at that age?

[00:02:07] **JACK:** Cabin boy.

[00:02:08] **HOWARD:** Is that right?

[00:02:09] **JACK:** [Inaudible]

[00:02:11] **HOWARD:** Wow.

[00:02:11] **JACK:** In those day [inaudible] was ten years, eleven years old—thought nothing about it, you know?

[00:02:19] **HOWARD:** What did your father do?

[00:02:20] **JACK:** My father was a carpenter, contractor, master of all trades. In those days, if you were a contractor you had to be a painter, a chimney builder, you had to do the plaster. Because jobs you couldn't [inaudible] when you was contract much. In those days, if you build up a contract for your house, why it would be maybe a couple, three guys and it would be out in the country. When it was twenty-two miles to go down to the railroad there, you couldn't send down for the painter for two days, or carpen—plaster for a day or two. Had to be a master of all trades.

[00:03:05] **HOWARD:** Were you here for the 1916 Waterfront strike? Or did you come after that?

[00:03:09] **JACK:** No, I didn't come in on the Waterfront strike. I came afterwards, and they had lots of work. So they gave us the jobs, off and on you know, we worked extra.

[00:03:24] **HOWARD:** What were working conditions like in those days, do you remember?

[00:03:26] **JACK:** Very good.

[00:03:27] **HOWARD:** They were good?

[00:03:28] **JACK:** Very good.

[00:03:30] **HOWARD:** Why don't you explain what that means?

[00:03:32] **JACK:** Well they still maintained their union, they still maintain the safety part of the work, you know. The employers always maintained that you, do this, or do that—it didn't matter if it was safety [sic] or not. So they maintained that and they maintained the hours and overtime. And of course, way back in 1916, the shipping and loading was so much different than what it is now or has been in the last ten years. It was pitiful. You worked by hand in those days. You took timber in those days and you worked them by hand, put them on a dolly and run them back, and dump them off. And if you had to ring them up, you had skids. And you used eight man doing that on one side when you were doing that and [inaudible] from side to side. You're helping each other. Because they had no machinery or nothing to do it with.

[00:04:32] **HOWARD:** Were you mostly loading timber?

[00:04:36] **JACK:** Mostly lumber, that's all there was down in that place. Lumber and a few logs was tired out . Very few logs and quite a few timbers were being sold at that time, what we called [inaudible] squares. And twenty-four by twenty-four down to eight-by-eight. And lumber was in that port, there was no cargo in that port. All lumber.

[00:04:59] **HOWARD:** Lumber, and this is St. Helens, right?

[00:05:00] **JACK:** Yeah, well St. Helens had, they had one, two, three saw mills at that time. And [?one tie?] mill, one [inaudible] mill, and they had Prescott, Oregon, just out of Rainier, where they had a big—what do you call it? Makes electricity.

[00:05:27] **HOWARD:** Oh the reactor [Trojan Nuclear Power Plant] , or something like that? Yeah, I know what you mean.

[00:05:36] **JACK:** Everybody's afraid of—

[00:05:37] **HOWARD:** Yeah, the nuclear reactor, yeah.

[00:05:39] **JACK:** Yeah, that's just in the corner of Prescott. They had that mill, and they had a mill over at Kalama.

[00:05:48] **HOWARD:** What was the union like? Do you remember anything about the union in those days?

[00:05:52] **JACK:** Oh, not too much because I wasn't a member of the union, see? And I wasn't allowed to attend union meetings.

[00:06:01] **HOWARD:** Why is that? Because you're an extra man?

[00:06:03] **JACK:** Yeah, extra man.

[00:06:04] **HOWARD:** Okay, so they regulated how many people could become union members?

[00:06:08] **JACK:** That's right. They figured what they're capacity was, and if somebody died or quit or something, they'd add on. You'd have to bring—you'd have to come in by turn.

[00:06:22] **HOWARD:** Was it a separate local from the Portland local?

[00:06:24] **JACK:** Yes, it was. All separate locals up and down the coast.

[00:06:28] **HOWARD:** How many men approximately were in the local? In St. Helens? Do you have any idea?

[00:06:36] **JACK:** I'd say about, approximately 80.

[00:06:39] **HOWARD:** Eighty. And how many extra men were there, do you know?

[00:06:42] **JACK:** Oh, that's pretty hard to tell, they came and went through. Probably 20, maybe.

[00:06:46] **HOWARD:** Okay, so you were in the minority, being non-union?

[00:06:49] **JACK:** Oh, yeah, we were in the minority.

[00:06:52] **HOWARD:** And this was the old ILA [International Longshoremen's Association] ?

[00:06:54] **JACK:** This was the ILA. But I can't think of the number of it. The hall number was 78.

[00:07:05] **HOWARD:** Yeah, right. So you remember the working conditions being pretty good at the time?

[00:07:10] **JACK:** I beg your pardon?

[00:07:12] **HOWARD:** The working conditions were pretty good, as you described them?

[00:07:15] **JACK:** Oh yes, oh yes. We didn't lose our working conditions until the 1922 strike.

[00:07:20] **HOWARD:** Yeah, then what happened? Did you go into the war? Shortly thereafter?

[00:07:24] **JACK:** Yeah, I went into the army, quick as war was declared. I and this guy both. We thought they would put us in either the engineers or on the ships. They put him in the engineers and put me in the Medical Corps.

[00:07:43] **HOWARD:** Is that right?

[00:07:45] **JACK:** Same as they do today.

[UNIDENTIFIED VOICE] : Will the dryer bother you?

[00:07:48] **HOWARD:** I don't think so, it should be alright, go ahead. [To Jack] When did you get out of the service?

[00:07:56] **JACK:** I got out in May 1919.

[00:07:58] **HOWARD:** And you did what then?

[00:08:00] **JACK:** I went back to St. Helens and worked a little bit and then I came up to Portland.

[00:08:07] **HOWARD:** Okay, when did you get into Portland?

[00:08:10] **JACK:** When did I get here? I got here in the '20s—

[00:08:13] **HOWARD:** Would you be willing to hold the mic? Because that [dryer] might drown you out.

[00:08:18] **JACK:** I got here in 1920. Yeah I was out in St. Helens about 6 or 7 months. No, I came here in—I guess it before 1920—1919.

[00:08:35] **HOWARD:** Were you here for the Seattle [Washington] general strike? Were you in the Northwest then?

[00:08:40] **JACK:** The 1934 general strike?

[00:08:42] **HOWARD:** No, the 1919 Seattle strike?

[00:08:44] **JACK:** No, no.

[00:08:45] **HOWARD:** Yeah, that happened earlier in 1919. Okay, so you came back to Portland then, 1919/1920, is that right? And you went back to work on the Waterfront?

[00:08:55] **JACK:** Yeah.

[00:08:56] **HOWARD:** And what were conditions like? Had they changed much?

[00:08:58] **JACK:** No, conditions were different—conditions in Portland were rotten compared to St. Helens.

[00:09:04] **HOWARD:** Is that right?

[00:09:05] **JACK:** Yeah they had a local there, and it was made up of old-timers, and they had a lot of extra men. And you'd go down and you'd let the ship come in with gravel—balance, you know? Those days the ships all had ballast, they had no water tanks, and you'd go down and shovel ballast, down to the floor where you

need your shovel and they'd knock you off and the old-timers took over. And the same thing with wheat, lots of wheat going out, they'd plow out, they'd got their heads up high and they'd come in and you'd have to pick up the jobs.

[00:09:42] **HOWARD:** Is that right?

[00:09:43] **JACK:** Yeah. Any hard job, seamen's job or anything like sulphur or anything like that, well you either picked them up or you didn't go out anymore, you know what I mean, see.

[00:09:54] **HOWARD:** Was there a union Portland? Or wasn't there?

[00:09:56] **JACK:** Oh yeah, Local Six.

[00:09:58] **HOWARD:** It seems though the union wasn't as strong though.

[00:10:00] **JACK:** The union was strong up until 1922, for their own benefits.

[00:10:06] **HOWARD:** How many were union men and how many were extra men, do you have any idea?

[00:10:11] **JACK:** I don't know, must've been 700 or 800.

[00:10:17] **HOWARD:** Oh it was that many?

You'd say about 700 to 800 men in Portland, and how many extra men were there? I mean were all the 700 men in the union?

[00:10:29] **JACK:** I would say about 700 were union men, and about 150 were extra men or two.

[00:10:34] **HOWARD:** Okay, were you here for the 1922 strike?

[00:10:43] **JACK:** 'Twenty-two strike? Yes.

[00:10:46] **HOWARD:** Why don't you tell me about that? How did it start and what were some of the issues?

[00:10:48] **JACK:** Well, it started like any other strike, they negotiated and couldn't reach agreement, and then the employer figured they were strong enough with the help of the government and everybody else, and the presidential force was incoming power to the—was coming up on the republican situation. And he passed a lot of phony laws, and decided to strike the whole Pacific Coast, with the help of the International officials of the ILA on the East Coast.

[00:11:35] **HOWARD:** Do you remember any issue with the Fink Hall [a hiring hall run by employers] ? You know, hiring through the Fink Hall? Was that an issue?

[00:11:41] **JACK:** Oh yes, after the strike was called, why it didn't take longer till the strike was busted. And then they had what they called a government hiring hall. Setup by the government, but it didn't work out. Then they had a hall setup by the Wobblies.

[00:12:00] **HOWARD:** Let me ask you a question about the Wobblies, how active were the Wobblies on the Portland Waterfront at that time?

[00:12:06] **JACK:** Very active on the non-union list.

[00:12:09] **HOWARD:** On the non-union list. Now why don't you explain that to me, because it seems to run counter to the Wobbly principles.

[00:12:14] **JACK:** Well, the Wobblies were very active because they know that Local 6 was doing a bad job, and the—it was getting very active in the woods [at logging camps] and so they set up a hall to see if they could take over the local and see if they couldn't—stop the scabs from working on the Waterfront, which Local 6 didn't seem to give a damn if they lost their jobs or not. So they were very active, they had a hall.

[00:12:49] **HOWARD:** Were you hired through the Wobbly Hall?

[00:12:51] **JACK:** Yeah, I was a Wobbly.

[00:12:52] **HOWARD:** You were a Wobbly.

[00:12:53] **JACK:** Yes.

[00:12:54] **HOWARD:** How many on the Waterfront were Wobblies? Do you have any estimation?

[00:12:58] **JACK:** Oh that's pretty hard to explain how many men they—at that time, at that time on the Waterfront, I'd say there was probably 150 Wobblies.

[00:13:09] **HOWARD:** Out of 800 or so?

[00:13:14] **JACK:** Maybe 200, I don't know. Then we got a lot of help from the guys out in the woods.

[00:13:20] **HOWARD:** What kind of help did they give you and how?

[00:13:22] **JACK:** Well they'd come in and try to pick at the ships and do this and do that, you know, to try to bring it around so the scabs wouldn't be working.

[00:13:33] **HOWARD:** How many of the longshoremen in Portland were former loggers? Do you have any idea?

[00:13:38] **JACK:** Now?

[00:13:39] **HOWARD:** No, in those days.

[00:13:41] **JACK:** In those days? Oh, I wouldn't know how many was former loggers, they wasn't too many in Local 6 that were former loggers, they were quite a few extra people that was loggers. We had a lot of Wobblies going in after the strike was broke. To 1934, we went 12 years, you know? Without a union. We had a lot of Wobblies.

[00:14:08] **HOWARD:** You did? Throughout that whole period?

[00:14:10] **JACK:** Oh yes, in 1934, we had a lot of Wobblies on the Waterfront.

[00:14:16] **HOWARD:** Do you have any idea how many? Just approximate.

[00:14:18] **JACK:** Oh—

[00:14:20] **HOWARD:** More than twenty?

[00:14:21] **JACK:** More than twenty. We had at least 350 I'd say.

[00:14:26] **HOWARD:** Really? That many?

[00:14:27] **JACK:** Oh yes, they didn't—they wouldn't make themselves known to everybody, but they was there.

[00:14:36] **HOWARD:** Now, why don't you tell me a little bit more about the 1922 strike? Do you remember much about that? I remember the Wobblies—the ILA accused the Wobblies of scabbing of going back. . . Is that true?

[00:14:46] **JACK:** Yeah, that was just to turn it around the opposite way.

[00:14:51] **HOWARD:** What does that mean?

[00:14:52] **JACK:** The Local 6 scabbed on themselves. They're the ones that went back to work.

[00:14:56] **HOWARD:** And so the Wobblies decided—?

[00:14:59] **JACK:** The problem was the old-timers in Local 6, you know, they'd go to work to get all the deck jobs, like driving winches and trains, and get all the boss jobs, and stuff like that, you see? Wobblies never scabbed on them at all.

[00:15:15] **HOWARD:** Why do you think the Wobblies were so strong in the Northwest?

[00:15:19] **JACK:** Well, the employers made them that way. The employers organized them as far as I'm concerned. They made it so tough in the woods for them that they couldn't make a living unless they worked anywhere from 10 to 12 hours, low pay, they wouldn't give them any bedding, they gave them a poor old bunk-house what had a stove in it and it leaked all the time, rotten food. And you had to carry a blanket roll from one job to another. And the employers just kept on beating them and beating them until they just figured they had to join some organization, and the Wobblies was a new organization coming up, and they joined the Wobblies, and they got their demands!

[00:16:04] **HOWARD:** Why didn't the AF of L try to organize?

[00:16:07] **JACK:** Who?



[00:16:07] **HOWARD:** The American Federation of Labor, some of the old craft unions?

[00:16:11] **JACK:** Well, they had some organization in the saw mills and stuff like that. But that was just a paper union, they never done nothing for the guys, they got their pocketful and just about the size of it.

[00:16:30] **HOWARD:** Why did you join the Wobblies?

[00:16:32] **JACK:** Because I believe in the—well first, I believe in socialism.

[00:16:37] **HOWARD:** Did you believe in it when you joined?

[00:16:39] **JACK:** I believed in it when I joined, and I believed it in when I was a kid!

[00:16:42] **HOWARD:** Where did you get your politics from, do you remember?

[00:16:47] **JACK:** Well, by reading a lot of Eugene Debs writing, and so forth. My dad was a socialist, and his whole family was a socialists and—

[00:17:01] **HOWARD:** He was a carpenter, right? Union carpenter?

[00:17:05] **JACK:** Didn't have the union where we was at that time. At that time they had them in the big cities, but he was in the Indian Territory building houses at that time because—that was [inaudible] in 1907.

[00:17:20] **HOWARD:** So you joined out of a political commitment really, right?

[00:17:23] **JACK:** Well, I could see that there was going to have to be some kind of turn around the labor, because the labor chiefs at that time, what do you call them, the high up mucks-a-mucks, the lawyers always had their hand in the corporation pocket. They didn't give a damn about the guy paying the union dues to them, or nothing else. They wanted theirs and they got theirs. All through labor, up to now, up to right now. There all these people, they didn't think about working. Look at people like Joe P. Ryan, the head of the ILA, and died a millionaire—had to go to prison to get some of it, but. . .

[00:18:15] **HOWARD:** Yeah, I agree with you actually. I mean it's really sad, the American Labor Movement. There's a few good people, people like [?Winston Singer?] I think they're headed in the right direction.

[00:18:23] **JACK:** Oh there's some good people, but they can't get to first base, you know? Because they can do pretty good for the union laws, but they can't get to first base as to as labor should be. Like, they didn't come out and go against Reagan, you know, which they should've done. No they all fell in his pockets. And now, it's just a different situation.

There's some good labor unions. Very good. But the good labor unions was knocked down years ago, some of them became of the, “Oh well, this is a communist outfit.” Or this or that. Just like the NMU [National Maritime Union] , started building a good union for the sailors. Which the sailors have nothing. Lundeberg never did nothing for them in the West Coast.

[00:19:20] **HOWARD:** Let me ask you a question about the Wobblies. How many men do you think joined the Wobblies for bread-and-butter reasons [a focus on wages and working conditions] —?

[00:19:26] **JACK:** Bread-and-butter.

[00:19:27] **HOWARD:** That was the most important reason?

[00:19:28] **JACK:** Bread-and-butter.

[00:19:29] **HOWARD:** Rather than the political.

[00:19:31] **JACK:** Yeah, bread-and-butter, no bullets.

[00:19:33] **HOWARD:** No bullets. [chuckles]

Do you remember engaging in any work slowdowns with the Wobblies? Or anything like that? Beside the '22 strike?

[00:19:45] **JACK:** No, I never engaged in particular any slowdowns with the Wobblies, I went to a lot of the meetings, and took a hand in that and try to lay out policies for the wood situation, because you couldn't organize the Wobblies on the Waterfront at that time. We can bring them in as membership, but we couldn't promise them, only what work they could get themselves because the employers had full control of the hiring hall. And quick as you found out you're going to the union or anything like that, and they had stool pigeons [informers for the employers] but then you were fired, you see.

[00:20:16] **HOWARD:** Do you think the Wobblies had a real big impact in Portland in those days?

[00:20:28] **JACK:** Yeah, in the Northwest here, what we have here in the Northwest are the woods, and the saw mills. I worked many a nights with the Wobblies in the woods.

[00:20:39] **HOWARD:** So you started, what? You worked on the Waterfront for a little bit and then went to the woods?

[00:20:44] **JACK:** No I didn't go to the—I worked about six months in the woods.

[00:20:47] **HOWARD:** So you spent most of your time on the Waterfront?

[00:20:50] **JACK:** Well, I knew the organizers here in Portland and we'd go out, and the only time we could meetings was in the nighttime. A lot of times we had them we'd have them out in the woods. They had no place to meet, because if the employers found out that the camp was organizing and so forth, well, he'd fire them! So everything had to be done a secret basis, you know? Then once you got about two-thirds of the camp, then you could tell the employers what you wanted, what you wanted to do, because you had the majority and they stayed with you. So I worked very closely with the organizers in the woods.

[00:21:26] **HOWARD:** So you were an active Wobbly member, right?

[00:21:28] **JACK:** That's right. But I wasn't in Washington when the American Legionnaires shot the Wobbly's hall all up in 1919 [Centralia Massacre] . But I got a friend who was there.

[00:21:43] **HOWARD:** Oh, is that right?

[00:21:43] **JACK:** Yeah, but I'm not going to name him because, you know.

[00:21:46] **HOWARD:** Okay, let me ask you a couple more questions about the '22 strike, do you remember any major acts of violence perpetuated in that strike, either by workers or employers?

[00:21:58] **JACK:** No, not in Portland.

[00:21:59] **HOWARD:** Not in Portland?

[00:22:01] **JACK:** No, it didn't seem like there was a strike because, it seemed like in four or five days, the old-timers went back to work.

[00:22:08] **HOWARD:** It was that short, huh? Only four or five days?

[00:22:10] **JACK:** Well, that's what it seemed like. Of course they straggled in and it took them a month. They got all the men they wanted, you know. The government was putting in their men, and there was everything else. All they wanted was just enough old-timers to be the boss and the winch drivers, and show the other guys who'd never been on a ship what to do.

[00:22:30] **HOWARD:** Did the ILA call the strike? Or the Wobblies? Or both?

[00:22:33] **JACK:** No, the Wobblies had nothing to do with calling the strike.

[00:22:35] **HOWARD:** They didn't call it?

[00:22:36] **JACK:** No, the ILA—the employers—as far as I'm concerned, the employers called the strike.

[00:22:45] **HOWARD:** Because of a lock-out?

[00:22:46] **JACK:** Yeah, up and down the coast. They negotiated and negotiated and they couldn't reach to no terms, and when the employers seen that they had them behind the eight-ball, they just, “Well you guys are locked-out and we're going to bring in a bunch of people and they're going to go to work.” And that's why they went through it.

[00:23:05] **HOWARD:** Who did they bring in as scabs? Do you remember what kind of people they were?

[00:23:09] **JACK:** Oh yes, they were people destitute [sic] for work. And they brought in a bunch of colored people from the South but they never used them.

[00:23:18] **HOWARD:** They never used?

[00:23:18] **JACK:** They brought them over and put them over in Terminal Two, and the city council and so forth and everything else rared up so much and never used them.

[00:23:19] **HOWARD:** That's interesting.

[00:23:19] **JACK:** I guess they shipped them back or. . .

[00:23:23] **HOWARD:** They didn't use them?

[00:23:35] **JACK:** No.

[00:23:36] **HOWARD:** Because—who was telling me? I guess Richardson or somebody said that they used them.

[00:23:40] **JACK:** In Seattle probably, but I'm talking about Portland. That's the only place I would know about the '22 strike in Portland.

[00:23:45] **HOWARD:** I thought—it was [Rosco] Craycraft who told me, he wasn't there at the time, but he told me he thought they used the Blacks as scabs, but you say no.

[00:23:52] **JACK:** They brought them in.

[00:23:53] **HOWARD:** Okay, and they decided—

[00:23:54] **JACK:** Not to use them.

[00:23:56] **HOWARD:** Not used, okay.

[00:23:57] **JACK:** That's as far as I know, I never seen any on the Waterfront. But of course, you see, Portland never had any colored people on the Waterfront until after [Harry] Bridges became president on the West Coast, here. We had one colored man in the entire Columbia River that I know and he was out of Astoria [Oregon] . But Tacoma [Washington] and Seattle and 'Frisco [San Francisco, California] and Pedro [San Pedro, California] they had colored people.

[00:24:28] **HOWARD:** Okay anything else about the '22 strike that you can think of that was important?

[00:24:32] **JACK:** No, only I went through starvation for 12 years, partly.

[00:24:37] **HOWARD:** From '22 to '34, yeah.

[00:24:39] **JACK:** I stayed with it, but we had nothing to anyways, so we picked up a day a week.

[00:24:48] **HOWARD:** What happened after the strike? Did they effectively blacklist people like you?

[00:24:52] **JACK:** No, no, no they didn't know anything about me. You had to be very secretive about your movement, because they had stool pigeons, which they got even today. In all unions they have them.

[00:25:09] **HOWARD:** So then after the '22 strike the employers set up the Fink Hall, so-called. And what was that like, hiring through the Fink Hall?

[00:25:20] **JACK:** They—you, you, you. They don't want you, they don't want you—they pass you up. See it's just, you, you, you. Like they hire in New York on the dock.

[00:25:26] **HOWARD:** Shape-up sort of, right?

[00:25:28] **JACK:** Shape-up. And anytime they come down over—later on, they come down what we called a nail board. A board with a whole bunch of holes through them, you know? And the guys who worked extra, didn't work in a steady gang, you know, they had steady gangs, people worked steady gangs. But if you didn't work in a steady gang, you punched in on that nail board. And if you didn't come down to you that day, then you were up that much closer the next morning. If you didn't get it the next morning, you probably got it on the third day. And when you came in for work again, you had to go down on the bottom of that board.

[00:26:12] **HOWARD:** This happened when?

[00:26:15] **JACK:** This happened well—nail board came along about 19 and [pause] 24, 25.

[00:26:23] **HOWARD:** Is that right? That sounds almost like a rotary system of hiring.

[00:26:27] **JACK:** Well, it was only for the people who worked extra, people without gangs. See the gangs only—the gangs were only six man in a hold, and a boss and two winch drivers and two sling men. And then when we had to have eight men in the hull, you had to hire from this board. And then we had boats come in here, steam schooner line, McCormick [Lumber Company] and all of those, and the extra men got all of that work, you see, the gangs didn't get it all.

[00:26:55] **HOWARD:** Why did the employers agree to that? Wouldn't it have been better for them to pick and choose among the extra men?

[00:27:00] **JACK:** Well, they let the boss for a long time to pick and choose and they still pick and choose after they had the nail board.

[00:27:08] **HOWARD:** Oh they did?

[00:27:09] **JACK:** The nail board, the only thing was it helped the guys when extra gangs and so forth, had to be made up, stuff like that. Then we had, as I say in the Steam Schooner they only in brought in freights and got lumber, and that was done only by extra men. Gangs didn't go in them at all.

[00:27:32] **HOWARD:** And they were picked by the nail board pretty much?

Well that almost sounds like the kind of thing that happened right after the '34 strike. Where you had rotary hiring, you plug into the hall.

[00:27:42] **JACK:** The only thing that was different after the '34 strike, when got charged in the hiring hall, we had an earnings clerk. And you went out in the job and you worked on a ship for two days or one day, or

however many hours, you had to turn in your paid time and overtime work and then you had to rotate on the board what they called a little section, the highest section, next to high, and lowest section. And if you were up through a certain amount above the high board, you had to go down to the low board. And everybody went out ahead you, because you earned so much.

[00:28:20] **HOWARD:** So they rotated by earnings, and over on the nail board they rotated by jobs.

[00:28:24] **JACK:** Some gangs too. Nail boards, you just come in on the job, and you plugged in behind what they called a low plug. Didn't have no earning system at all.

[00:28:38] **HOWARD:** Why would the employers go for a nail board? It seems like—do you have any idea?

[00:28:43] **JACK:** I have no idea.

[00:28:44] **HOWARD:** It seems like a victory for the men, there. There was no union really.

[00:28:47] **JACK:** Well it was victory for the guys that worked on what we called the steam schooners and them Grocery boats we called it. Brought groceries from California, took lumber back. It was a victory for them, but that's about the only way—the easiest way to pick them. The boss would go out and pick his own men, but for on these other boats, they just called out from the nail board.

[00:29:16] **HOWARD:** So the preferred gangs were still picked by the boss, but the extra men the steam schooner men were on the nail board.

[00:29:24] **JACK:** That's right.

[00:29:24] **HOWARD:** Well, that's interesting, because it sounds an awful like what happened in '34 would have given the men a little taste of what that was.

[00:29:31] **JACK:** The only thing different in '34, we took over and thing went on a dollar basis earnings. You're a high earner, you went down on the low section, all of the rest of them went out before. Come around to where you—we went around what they called “no-man's land.” Then you graduated out of that. And then when got to work, you probably went to work that day, out of no-man's land too. [inaudible] Maybe standing there for three, four, days.

[00:29:59] **HOWARD:** Do you remember any attempts to form unions in the '20s? To reform the ILA or something like that?

[00:30:01] **JACK:** Oh, there was the nucleus of the ILA, but there was a nucleus of that that was never given up. The charter was never given up.

[00:30:02] **HOWARD:** Oh it was never surrendered?

[00:30:03] **JACK:** No.

[00:30:03] **HOWARD:** Do you know [Conrad] Negstad or [Peabody?] .

[00:30:18] **JACK:** Oh, yes I knew Negstad very well, he was an old Local 6 man.

[00:30:22] **HOWARD:** He said he tried to organize a union in 1924, and he got a couple hundred guys together.

[00:30:27] **JACK:** Well, that's true, that's true. They kept on it—they didn't break up, they kept on with the charter. 1929, I think we had about 100 or 200. Maybe 200. 1934, I don't know, I'd say 400, but—

[END PART ONE/BEGIN PART TWO]

500 wanted to join the union. But they couldn't out and say they were in the union. They wouldn't come out—some of them wouldn't come out and wear the button, because they were afraid that if we lost the strike, which we knew was coming up, if they lost they'd be blackballed probably off of the Waterfront, you see. But we had a nucleus of, I'm sure, of 300 and 400.

[00:31:13] **HOWARD:** Out of about 1,300, you said?

[00:31:14] **JACK:** I'd say about 1,300—1,200 to 1,300 working on the Waterfront, half of them started [inaudible] .

[00:31:20] **HOWARD:** What were working conditions like after the twenty-two strike, were they affected?

[00:31:23] **JACK:** It was as much as between hell and heaven.

[00:31:26] **HOWARD:** Is that right? Why don't you explain that a little bit.

[00:31:28] **JACK:** Well, it's pretty hard to explain, the employers had the whip and if you didn't do the work, you didn't get no jobs. They'd work you sometimes through midnight and order you to come back at seven o'clock the next morning. Sometimes you worked into noon and you worked until ten or eleven o'clock without going to get your dinner. Sometimes you worked—went to dinner at six o'clock in the evening and worked all night long going to midnight, maybe stay till nine o'clock in the morning to get the ship out. They had control and you either done it, or you had no job. They'd give you hell, there was no such thing a thing as safety.

[00:32:14] **HOWARD:** A real victory for the employers then? Total.

[00:32:14] **JACK:** They organized—the longer the—the longer it went back to '22, they organized the longshoremen, no question about that. They were the best organizers we had.

Well they got so, they couldn't take it anymore, you know? The only thing you would do, you work so long and you just couldn't put it out anymore, and they just keep battling you, and I just can never understand that because after you get tired you can't do no work. Oh they were the best—they organized the whole West Coast.

[00:32:48] **HOWARD:** Why do you think the employers were so anti-union on the West Coast?

[00:32:52] **JACK:** Well I don't know, only through the experience I went through—as I said before—that you know, up in time that Ryan was president [of the ILA] , he had his hands in their pockets. And the East Coast, the employers were—they were just as anti-union on the East Coast as they were on the West Coast, but they

had anything they wanted. All they had to do was to tell Ryan what they wanted and he got it! The union had nothing to say about it. Whatsoever.

Here, after Bridges become district president here, everything began to turn to beat the band. We had a stronger union all the way through—got stronger and stronger and stronger.

[00:33:55] **HOWARD:** Before we get there, let me ask you a few questions about the '34 strike. You said immediately prior to that there were maybe 400 or 500 guys in the union just before the strike, what were conditions immediately like prior to the strike in '33?

[00:34:09] **JACK:** Just as bad as—they never got any better.

[00:34:12] **HOWARD:** So they were bad?

[00:34:13] **JACK:** They were real bad, killed people all the time, crippled people up all the time, just like how it was before the Wobblies organized in the woods. Everything was hijacked to “Hurry up, hurry up, hurry up.”

[00:34:27] **HOWARD:** And then you came over into the strike?

[00:34:28] **JACK:** The gear was overloaded, bones would break, falls would break.

After the '34 strike, it took about a year to get some of the conditions started back. The first thing we started was the safety deal. And we got the government in it in the safety deal. And they got along, made some very, very good safety rules that was ruled on by arbitrators and so forth, which made the working conditions so much better than what they was before. We got conditions worked through that I never thought would ever, ever be in effect.

[00:35:14] **HOWARD:** What about sling-loads and stuff like that after the '34 strike?

[00:35:18] **JACK:** That's what I'm talking about. They just cut down—we got in the contract pounds—it'll only be 21 pounds could be on the board palate, you know? We got rules went through you steel and stuff could be only so much capacity of the boom. This and that. Before we had five-ton boom, and the employer would put six and seven and eight ton [sic] on it, and breaking them, this and that. We got all kinds of good working conditions, and they still got good working conditions.

[00:35:56] **HOWARD:** Were there many job actions to oppress—?

[00:36:00] **JACK:** No, it didn't amount to anything. Had a job action every once and while but we won them all out.

[00:36:12] **HOWARD:** What about the '34 strike itself? Was there a great deal of violence that occurred during the course of the strike?

[00:36:19] **JACK:** Not important. We had violence but nothing to mention. The only thing we really had—we had good control in Portland on the Waterfront.



[00:36:32] **HOWARD:** Why do you suppose that was so?

[00:36:34] **JACK:** Well, we organized. We organized. We organized the farmers. Not organized, but we told them we went out and went to the grange. We told them what was going to happen and we was going to go on strike and we had to put it the corporation, we done the same thing in the woods. We done the same thing with the unemployment. We went to meet and explain to them what it meant if we could get organized, what it would mean to them. We went to Reed College, and we went to high schools.

[00:37:05] **HOWARD:** Is that right? So you contacted farmers and schools?

[00:37:10] **JACK:** And unemployment, it was about unemployment. And we got these guys' attention, and that's what the employer was going to use for scabs more or less. Well, he got fooled.

[00:37:26] **HOWARD:** Did many people contribute to the strike? Or was it farmers pretty much?

[00:37:29] **JACK:** Oh yes. 1934, farmer says, "Come on out here out in the field." Big spuds, vegetables. The fishermen out in the coast went out, took out the boat and went out and a boatload of fish for us, this and that. And of course the unemployed man had nothing to give, other than himself. And we got a lot of donations. Donations.

[00:37:56] **HOWARD:** Do you think that the public in Portland was in your side? Or did that matter?

[00:38:02] **JACK:** No. Not to start with. The working people, yes. Most of the working people I would say yes. But of course, the mayor [Joseph K. Carson] was against us, the police—we had pretty good cooperation with the policemen and the firemen.

[00:38:24] **HOWARD:** Why do you think the cops were so friendly?

[00:38:26] **JACK:** Well there was a lot of cops after and down around that time. There was lake cops down and around the Waterfront and everything else, and they thought quite a bit of the longshoremen, [background conversation grows loud] and so they kind of—quite a few wrastlers [sic] in the policemen and we had quite a few wrastlers with us, and I don't know. And railroad people sometimes were on the side of them. We had information from the policemen, we had information from the railroad, and we had information on what the foreman could get, all channeled into us, and we knew exactly where to step. We could hit a spot where we figured they're going to bring some scabs in. We're going to hit that spot. So we know where we was going to hit it, the policemen knew where we was going to hit, and all of that, but we've give out a false alarm from across town to someplace else. And of course the policemen knew it was going on so they'd go there. While we cleaned up on the other places.

[00:39:32] **HOWARD:** That's surprising.

[00:39:34] **JACK:** Yeah, and the radio man and policemen told us too, when they was going to go to Terminal Four and open up at Terminal Four headed on the fifth of July.

[00:39:48] **HOWARD:** Oh is that right? On the fifth? Same as in San Francisco.

[00:39:54] **JACK:** Well that was all over the coast.

[00:39:55] **HOWARD:** It was a coast wide thing? I didn't know that.

[00:39:56] **JACK:** Coastwise Employment movement.

[00:39:58] **HOWARD:** So the employers made an offensive on the fifth?

[00:40:00] **JACK:** Offensive on the fifth, they was going open every port on the Pacific Coast.

[00:40:04] **HOWARD:** I didn't know that I thought it was San Francisco.

[00:40:06] **JACK:** Oh no, no.

[00:40:08] **HOWARD:** So what happened here on the fifth? Why don't you explain that.

[00:40:11] **JACK:** Well the UP [Union-Pacific] train called in from the—one of the outfits called us, told us that they had two car loads of policemen. We were going to go to Terminal Four with them, and what time they were going to leave over there, and what time they were holding it down on Terminal Four. That was the city dock. And they had to go down around through this curve and the high banks was there. And the Pier Park was there. So we got all the guys together and everything else and a lot of help. We had this information two-days ahead of time. What was going to happen. And the engineers and the break men told us, said all we had to do to get one [inaudible] back and hit that locomotive with a few rocks. And they'd back it up. The time they were starting to back it up, the damn policemen jumped out of the cars and turned loose. Actually fired.

[00:41:12] **HOWARD:** Firing guns?

[00:41:14] **JACK:** Oh yes, oh yes.

[00:41:15] **HOWARD:** Not tear gas, actual pulled bullets?

[00:41:18] **JACK:** Shooting. Shot guns and rifles and pistols.

[00:41:23] **HOWARD:** Wow.

[00:41:25] **JACK:** We had two guys wounded, one of them pretty seriously hit in the mouth and come up over here, shot. The other one was hospitalized for a little while. Well we nobody killed like they did over in 'Frisco and Seattle.

[00:41:40] **HOWARD:** Is that right? Now I thought Craycraft or somebody did tell me that somebody did die here in Portland as a result of the '34 strike?

[00:41:47] **JACK:** No.

[00:41:48] **HOWARD:** You don't remember that?

[00:41:49] **JACK:** We had nobody that was killed on the fifth of July.

[00:41:53] **HOWARD:** How about some other time during '34? Is that possible?

[00:41:56] **JACK:** No. I was the main dispatcher, all during the strike.

[00:42:09] **HOWARD:** Maybe it was Seattle. Yeah that's where it was. I'm sorry. So there was nobody killed here?

[00:42:18] **JACK:** No. No time during the strike, and we had quite a few—we never did get really tangled up. They never did bring—well they had one boat working down in Terminal Four. But they didn't get nothing in there. Truck drivers wouldn't go in there. Another thing, truck drivers was [inaudible] the street for fifteen-dollar billion, you know, at that time. Not the truck drivers but the head of it. But we got good service out of them.

[00:42:52] **HOWARD:** So they were supportive?

[00:42:53] **JACK:** We got good service out of everybody. The cooks and waitresses and everybody—they were just hanging on a limb. We got good service out of them and made us strike a whole lot better here in Portland.

[00:43:06] **HOWARD:** What about other groups that may have supported? Was there the Marine Workers Industrial Union [MWIU] ? It was sort of a radical dual union led by the communists at that time. Were they active at all?

[00:43:18] **JACK:** The—not that I knew of. The Marine Oilers and Watertenders [Pacific Coast Marine Firemen, Oilers, Watertenders and Wipers Association, or Marine Firemen's Union] , of course they were going to strike that was really the union—and I don't remember.

[00:43:33] **HOWARD:** I guess what I'm wondering is if they were socialists and radicals and communists during the strike, talking?

[00:43:37] **JACK:** Oh yes. We got—we allowed the head of the communist party here, Multnomah County. He come down here in the hall, outside of the hall, we was locked out of the hall as far as I was concerned, we had little hall across the corner, and he'd come down there and get on a truck and speak to the longshoremen and everybody else. Socialists, and all the radicals you can think of. We didn't give a damn who they was, we just wanted help and that's what happened and we got it.

[00:44:08] **HOWARD:** Do you think the men might've been radicalized listening to all this speaking or did it have little impact on them?

[00:44:16] **JACK:** The men were brainwashed from doing too much work! And of course we had several men on the Waterfront talking to them all the time about what the strike would mean to them, what we wanted—this and all that. But you had to be very bold, and in the case, “well if I lost a job I'd have to go and look for another job.” But then you had to know who you was talking to.

[00:44:44] **HOWARD:** Now there was a motion passed here by the Central Labor Council for a general strike here in Portland, wasn't there? But it never got anywhere—do you remember anything about that?

[00:44:55] **JACK:** No, I don't remember the Labor Council ever passing a motion for a general strike. Of course, as I say, I was a night dispatcher and we spent sometimes two days before we went to bed sometimes. Because we've been dispatching all night, we had to have the halls open, to have the telephones open, and we'd have to have five or six flying squads, and we'd have to know where they was at. We'd have to know what was going on, so I really don't know too much was going on with the labor council. I knew what was going in the strike committee because we'd have a report on it all the time. A fellow'd come down and tell us what was going on.

[00:45:44] **HOWARD:** Overall, how important was the '34 strike was to the men?

[00:45:50] **JACK:** Just the fact between life and death.

[00:45:53] **HOWARD:** It was? Why don't you elaborate on that a little bit. Can you?

[00:45:55] **JACK:** Well, I don't have to much to say on it, only question if we lost the '34 strike than we lost about 90 percent of the people working on the Waterfront. Would've been blackballed. Or they would've kept a few winch drivers, a few bosses. That's all—you just lost your livelihood that's all.

[00:46:15] **HOWARD:** And you also said—how many Wobblies? You said a couple hundred or so at least?

[00:46:19] **JACK:** Oh I'd say that probably, 150 to 200.

[00:46:29] **HOWARD:** So you had a few radical Wobblies, you had a few radicals coming down and speaking you had—

[00:46:34] **JACK:** Most of your radical people—and of course we had [?amongst them too?] at that time there was street-speakers down in around Third Street and down there. And they'd get a gang around them and talked and told you what was going on—especially the parks.

[00:46:58] **HOWARD:** What was it like to come back after the '34 strike? Did the work change, was it a little better for the men?

[00:47:03] **JACK:** Well, it took about six months to get it straightened out. Really, it took about two years to get it straightened out the way we wanted. See, we had to go through some arbitration on some stuff because machine was setup for that. In a couple years, it was just like the same difference between daylight and dark.

[00:47:26] **HOWARD:** Men had a great ability to stand up to the employers?

[00:47:29] **JACK:** Oh yes. They had more to look forward to. It was working—we had conditions, you can only work three hours if the ship was sailing that night and we worked all day. And if you had night gangs coming you could only work till six o'clock. And everything was so much different than working 24 sometimes to 48 hours on the ships. Sometimes with only two meals.

[00:47:54] **HOWARD:** Do you remember any stories, like when you came back to work and men standing up to employers or men standing up to walking bosses? You must've seen a few things like that happening.

[00:48:05] **JACK:** Oh yes you could tell them they could go to hell a damn sight easier than you could before fooled because before you told the walking boss you wasn't going to do it or the boss, he'd of won! But then you were fired! I know one time I refused to work on Christmas day and I told the boss two weeks ahead of time I was going to Boise, Idaho for Christmas, and I got out in Christmas day. When I got back I got a month in the hall.

[00:48:38] **HOWARD:** That was before '34?

[00:48:40] **JACK:** Yeah.

[00:48:42] **HOWARD:** And then afterward men could stand up for their rights?

[00:48:46] **JACK:** Absolutely, if you get out in the job and it's too hard you could get a replacement. And if you got sick on the job, it was easy to get a replacement for you. And then you could pick your own jobs if you picked it off of the board.

[00:49:05] **HOWARD:** Were you guys red-baited like you were in San Francisco?

[00:49:11] **JACK:** By the [?Aragonia?] yeah. But not personally by the—oh, by the mayor, sure, and the council.

[00:49:20] **HOWARD:** How did the men relate to that?

[00:49:22] **JACK:** Well just like water off a duck [saying: water off a duck's back] .

[00:49:25] **HOWARD:** No effect then?

[00:49:26] **JACK:** No effect. All they wanted help from everybody. We treated them that way as much as possible, we had to have help and pay no attention to what they are they going and written in their journal at that time. And we had a talk in the air for a couple of weeks, explaining to the public what was going on.

[00:49:48] **HOWARD:** Who was that? Do you remember?

[00:49:51] **JACK:** Can't think of his name now.

[00:49:53] **HOWARD:** Was that Matt Meehan maybe?

[00:49:53] **JACK:** Who?

[00:49:54] **HOWARD:** Matt Meehan.

[00:49:55] **JACK:** No, I knew Matt well. No, Matt was—he was chairman of the strike committee. He was a sailor that fellow was. We paid for it if you know what I mean.

[00:50:08] **HOWARD:** And it was broadcasted throughout the city?

[00:50:10] **JACK:** Everyday. Everyday.

[00:50:12] **HOWARD:** That's interesting, did the men listen to that or do you know?

[00:50:16] **JACK:** Lots of them listened to it, yeah. The public too.

[00:50:22] **HOWARD:** That's an interesting idea. Did the Communist Party make their services available through their newspaper, The Western Worker, any of that stuff?

[00:50:35] **JACK:** Oh yeah.

[00:50:36] **HOWARD:** They were? Just like San Francisco then?

[00:50:38] **JACK:** Yeah, they made thereselfs [sic] available, they did even more than that, they went out and collected the stuff and got the food through the commissary.

[00:50:52] **HOWARD:** And did the men ever have greater admiration for them as a result of this? Or do you know if it had any impact?

[00:50:58] **JACK:** Well, we had a few red-baiters, but they never got no place. We had a very, very strong-minded union for everybody, and I don't think it made no difference where you belong to as long as you did your work. That was the main thing. I know that I was red-baited, all the time, all the time, red-baited. But, it didn't make no difference to me.

[00:51:24] **HOWARD:** Okay, then we got you back at work, and things are gradually improving over the next few years and then the war breaks out in '41 or so. Were you working on the Waterfront during the war, or did you go into the service?

[00:51:37] **JACK:** No, I worked on the Waterfront.

[00:51:39] **HOWARD:** You did?

[00:51:41] **JACK:** I had a chance to go into service as Lieutenant-Commander, in the Sea Bees [Construction Battalion] , but I told them I fought in one war and I'm never fighting in another one.

[00:51:51] **HOWARD:** Why?

[00:51:52] **JACK:** Well, I fought in one war to stop all wars, we just had more wars. And they said this one was different, they invaded—so the other one lasted just the same as this, they'd go to [inaudible] .

[00:52:02] **HOWARD:** Did you actually file as a conscientious objector, or did you just—?

[00:52:08] **JACK:** No, I didn't have to because they couldn't draft me.

[00:52:11] **HOWARD:** Why was that?

[00:52:12] **JACK:** Because I was old.

[00:52:14] **HOWARD:** Oh, you were beyond the age? Were you a member of the Socialist Party at this time? Were you ever a member of the socialist party?

[00:52:22] **JACK:** No, only just through communications of taking papers and so forth.

[00:52:29] **HOWARD:** So did the work change as the war began? Did the work become a little more intense, a little more speeded up?

[00:52:36] **JACK:** No, not—I worked both in ‘Frisco and in Portland.

[00:52:42] **HOWARD:** Why'd you go down to ‘Frisco?

[00:52:44] **JACK:** Had no work here.

[00:52:45] **HOWARD:** In the early phases of the war here, right?

[00:52:48] **JACK:** We had no Army, or no Navy work here.

[00:52:50] **HOWARD:** None? Didn't know that.

[00:52:52] **JACK:** And it took about six months to nine months to join the Navy, rigging here to go to work. Reroute the ships and the cargo.

[00:53:04] **HOWARD:** Why didn't they have any navy or army work here?

[00:53:06] **JACK:** Never had here, in Seattle and Pedro and ‘Frisco and San Diego [California] had it all. We never had it here.

[00:53:13] **HOWARD:** Do you know why?

[00:53:14] **JACK:** They had no reason I guess, the fort never went after it. Never had the facilities anyway.

[00:53:20] **HOWARD:** Yeah, somebody said the Columbia River could be too shallow and they were afraid it could be mined or something like that.

[00:53:29] **JACK:** That had nothing to do with—the river's silting up and should be down more. But the Army and Navy never built any docks here. The city never put in any docks for them [Army or Navy ships] or facilities for them before the war. It took them [the city] eight or nine months to get them started, had to reroute the ships and had to reroute cargo, and I went to ‘Frisco to work.

[00:53:56] **HOWARD:** Was there any work here? There must've been some work here.

[00:53:59] **JACK:** Oh yes, there was some work, but you see, you're—the war with Germany, you know? Course we didn't have no German ships. Scandinavian ships, we had few Scandinavian ships running here and around the islands—food carriers for our government, you know what I mean. And of course we had no Japanese ships coming in.

And well, they kind of divided up—some went to Pedro, some went to ‘Frisco, and some went Seattle.

[00:54:32] **HOWARD:** How many men left at that time? Do you have any idea?

[00:54:34] **JACK:** I have no idea, I wasn't here, but they had enough men to take—some went into shipyards too. And then when work began to pick up, we'd get a callback.

[00:54:46] **HOWARD:** Okay, so then the men came back pretty much, right?

[00:54:48] **JACK:** Oh yeah, oh yeah.

[00:54:50] **HOWARD:** So then you get these major disruptions at the beginning of the war, people scattered all over the place out of Portland Local 8, well it wasn't—yeah it was Local 8 then. And then, sometime as the war begins to pick up and they build things in Portland, they all come back?

[00:55:04] **JACK:** Yeah, and then a lot of them back from the shipyards too.

[00:55:10] **HOWARD:** They did?

[00:55:11] **JACK:** Yeah, some of them stayed down in the shipyards for a couple weeks or two for which [inaudible] .

[00:55:21] **HOWARD:** And the work itself, you felt, didn't really change all that much during the war? Because I remember—

[00:55:27] **JACK:** We had our same conditions.

[00:55:29] **HOWARD:** You did? You sure about that?

[00:55:31] **JACK:** Oh absolutely.

[00:55:33] **HOWARD:** Because Bridges came out in the beginning of the war—you may remember some of these quotes, nobody else does—but he came out and said, “We have to use our union as an instrument for the speed-up. That the class struggle had been suspended, we had to learn to get along with the employers, we have to push, push, push. We have to give up restrictive work rules.” Now, you say it didn't have any impact?

[00:55:56] **JACK:** Not in the—the only impact we had was on the raises. We froze our own wages.

[00:56:02] **HOWARD:** But you don't remember giving up any work rules?

[00:56:04] **JACK:** No.

[00:56:05] **HOWARD:** None?

[00:56:05] **JACK:** Nope.

[00:56:06] **HOWARD:** Sling-load limits? Gang size? All the same?



[00:56:09] **JACK:** Same thing is 'Frisco, I worked down there. Never gave up anything either.

[00:56:13] **HOWARD:** You didn't? Okay, that's interesting to know because one of the explanations for the failure of the Left—

[00:56:18] **JACK:** I don't remember Bridges making all those statements.

[00:56:20] **HOWARD:** And you don't remember that either?

[00:56:21] **JACK:** No.

[00:56:22] **HOWARD:** Nobody does! Craycraft was International Vice-president and he doesn't remember it.

[00:56:27] **JACK:** Neither do I.

[00:56:27] **HOWARD:** It's hard to believe.

Well, he made the statements, but I guess they weren't that significant to anyone at the time, but the press—

[00:56:34] **JACK:** We had our same safety rules and everything else, we gave up nothing.

[OUTSIDE CONVERSATION AUDIBLE]

[00:56:47] **HOWARD:** Were there any work stoppages during the war that you remember?

[00:56:51] **JACK:** No.

[00:56:52] **HOWARD:** None.

[00:56:53] **JACK:** Never had no cause for it that I know.

[00:56:56] **HOWARD:** And the work was fairly easy? It wasn't any harder?

[00:56:59] **JACK:** No. Oh, well of course we had to work a little harder because we had different cargo loads. We didn't lose any safety over it or nothing else. We—sure, we had a different kind of cargo, you know, we never had any ammunition and stuff out of here, out of Portland till this war broke out and see stuff like that and people didn't know nothing about it. The other ports, Seattle and 'Frisco, they know. They loaded that cargo for years, and so many people were scared to death of it. Wouldn't go on the ship, they were scared it was going to explode. And I told them—we had meetings over it. I said, "Have no fear," I says, after that admonition, I says, "They can dynamite and shoot it off anyway."

[00:57:51] **HOWARD:** There was a real nasty accident in San Francisco, [inaudible] , or something?

[00:57:57] **JACK:** Port Chicago.

[00:57:58] **HOWARD:** Yeah, right.

[00:58:00] **JACK:** Ship blew up.

[00:58:01] **HOWARD:** A few people lost their lives there.

[00:58:03] **JACK:** We had one Portland boy there. His father was a longshoreman and his brother was a longshoreman. The name of Potter. He was sailing.

[00:58:18] **HOWARD:** Were there any Black people hired during Local 8? That you remember?

[00:58:29] **JACK:** No, I don't remember hiring any Black people in Portland during the war. We had a couple, three army gangs working on the Waterfront at times when we couldn't furnish the army [with] the men. CB's [Construction Battalions, also Seabees] , you know? They were all Black, some of them.

[00:58:48] **HOWARD:** Oh is that right?

[00:58:48] **JACK:** But they all worked in their old gangs.

[00:58:53] **HOWARD:** So they were military gangs?

[00:58:55] **JACK:** Yeah, they had their own officers. We had a walking boss on the dock and on the ship both.

[00:59:00] **HOWARD:** Were the military gangs—were they called CB's? Is that what. . . ?

[00:59:00] **JACK:** Well, that's what you gang that worked in the army and navy. The loading and unloading ships. I don't know what you call them here in this port, but off-shore, you call them CB's, yeah.

[00:59:00] **HOWARD:** Did military personnel and civilians ever work together in the same gang?

[00:59:00] **JACK:** No.

[00:59:00] **HOWARD:** So it was always separated?

[00:59:00] **JACK:** But we had foreman and walking bosses on both dock and the ship to see that no rules were violated. You know what I mean about that. And—

[00:59:45] **HOWARD:** Do you have any idea how many men might've been drafted from Local8?

[01:00:00] **JACK:** I have no idea, but it was quite a few of them. And quite a few went into the CB's.

[01:00:05] **HOWARD:** Was it more than a quarter of the men do you think?

[01:00:07] **JACK:** Oh, no, no, no, no.

[01:00:09] **HOWARD:** Maybe 10 percent or something like that?

[01:00:11] **JACK:** Yeah, probably 10 percent all total.

[01:00:22] **HOWARD:** Do you remember the four-on four-off practice? Did that originate during the war? No? Was there much employer stalling during the war?

[01:00:35] **JACK:** Didn't have it when I retired, and that was in '59.

[01:00:36] **HOWARD:** They didn't have it here?

[01:00:36] **JACK:** No.

[01:00:37] **HOWARD:** They had it in several other ports, I guess they never had it here in Portland.

[01:00:40] **JACK:** I think they got it here now.

[01:00:42] **HOWARD:** Oh, is that right?

[01:00:43] **JACK:** I don't know I haven't been on the Waterfront. I retired.

[01:00:45] **HOWARD:** Are you active in the pensioners group?

[01:00:49] **JACK:** Used to be, but I can't get down the steps anymore.

[01:00:56] **HOWARD:** So let's move to the post-war period, and you had the 1948 strike, do you remember anything about that?

[01:01:00] **JACK:** Yeah, I was on the picket line in 1948. It was the matter of just doing your picket duty and coming home, there was no activity. No ship work, we were locked out.

[01:01:15] **HOWARD:** Do you remember the issues in the '48 strike?

[01:01:19] **JACK:** Well they wanted bread-and-butter. Raising wages, holding conditions—

[END PART TWO/BEGIN PART THREE]

—was locked out. You went down and you did your picket duty and you had to pick a captain and he made a note of everybody that was on the picket line. It was turned in so when strike was over with, well we knew who wasn't on the picket line and who was. There was no [inaudible] for the employers to make any move to open the port up.

[01:02:01] **HOWARD:** There weren't?

[01:02:01] **JACK:** No.

[01:02:07] **HOWARD:** Let me ask you as we move into the '50s, because my research becomes real critical because I'm concerned with how Bridges could survive the Cold War. Let me ask a few questions on this, do you remember when Bridges took his stand on the Korean War?

[01:02:21] **JACK:** Yeah.

[01:02:22] **HOWARD:** And it was not that popular at that time.

[01:02:25] **JACK:** [inaudible]

[01:02:25] **HOWARD:** Yeah, what did the men think of that?

[01:02:28] **JACK:** They thought of it the same way I thought of it, and I thought it as a war we had no business being in.

[01:02:32] **HOWARD:** The men thought of that as well?

[01:02:35] **JACK:** Sure they did.

[01:02:36] **HOWARD:** The rank-and-file?

[01:02:36] **JACK:** Eighty percent of the longshoremen thought the same thing.

[01:02:39] **HOWARD:** So they were in fundamental agreement with Bridges, you're saying?

[01:02:42] **JACK:** Oh absolutely.

[01:02:44] **HOWARD:** That's surprising.

[01:02:44] **JACK:** It was in Portland. I can't talk about the other ports.

[01:02:48] **HOWARD:** Yeah I understand, but you think 80 percent of the men supported Bridges?

[01:02:52] **JACK:** I'd say that, I may be wrong but—

[01:02:56] **HOWARD:** But at least you'd say that a majority was in agreement with him, right?

[01:03:00] **JACK:** Well they had to be, they kept electing him all the time.

[01:03:03] **HOWARD:** Well, is it possible that they didn't agree with him on that issues, but he could still deliver bread and butter?

[01:03:07] **JACK:** No, I think that they agreed with him because I know lots of them got up in the meetings and says, "Well, if he goes to jail, we'll close down the port."

[01:03:17] **HOWARD:** Is that right?

[01:03:18] **JACK:** Yeah, and I think that was pretty good backing.

[01:03:21] **HOWARD:** And he took a stand on screening? Remember the screening issue, the coast guard screening?

[01:03:28] **JACK:** I was screened often.

[01:03:30] **HOWARD:** Were you?

[01:03:30] **JACK:** Yeah.

[01:03:31] **HOWARD:** How many guys in Local 8 were screened? Do you have any idea?

[01:03:33] **JACK:** I have no idea but. . .

[01:03:36] **HOWARD:** More than 20 do you think?

[01:03:42] **JACK:** I think so.

[01:03:42] **HOWARD:** Seattle. The employers admitted there were over 50 screened in Seattle alone. It could've been a lot more. Do you remember much controversy around the screening issue in Local 8?

[01:03:53] **JACK:** No. The only place I was screened off was the ammunition plant in Rainier.

[01:03:59] **HOWARD:** That was military work or something?

[01:04:02] **JACK:** That's all military work, we worked under Army or Navy, whatever ship come in. And I had no trouble in 'Frisco, I had a pass in 'Frisco for both Army and Navy.

[01:04:16] **HOWARD:** Oh you did?

[01:04:17] **JACK:** Yeah, coast guard pass.

[01:04:19] **HOWARD:** That's strange. That you were—

[01:04:21] **JACK:** Yeah, but couldn't get a coast guard pass here!

[01:04:23] **HOWARD:** In Portland? What effect did screening have on the men? Did it sort of dampen militancy as all?

[01:04:29] **JACK:** No, we had plenty of work.

[01:04:31] **HOWARD:** Did it make men maybe a little more cautious for standing up for their rights?

[01:04:35] **JACK:** I don't think so.

[01:04:37] **HOWARD:** No?

[01:04:38] **JACK:** They had plenty of work until—we worked for the Army/Navy right here in Portland, but we couldn't work down to the ammunition dock.

[01:04:55] **HOWARD:** Was there ever an anti-Bridges faction organized in Local 8?

[01:05:00] **JACK:** Oh yeah.

[01:05:01] **HOWARD:** How big were they? How much support did they have?

[01:05:03] **JACK:** Very much a minority.

[01:05:05] **HOWARD:** Very much. What were the guys like who were most likely to be involved in that? Who—what kind of men?

[01:05:11] **JACK:** People who went through [inaudible] and going on about red-baiting and so forth. And Bridges was a communist, and he had communists in the local to control his local and all this and that. Oh yeah. Well people never stood up to nothing anyway. They would always wait and see if things were going to turn out alright.

[01:05:35] **HOWARD:** So they were just drawn in by the red-baiting basically, right?

[01:05:38] **JACK:** Red-baiting, red-baiting.

[01:05:41] **HOWARD:** Let me ask you—

[01:05:41] **JACK:** We didn't allow any red-baiting in our local.

[01:05:43] **HOWARD:** You didn't?

[01:05:44] **JACK:** Well, I mean they tried to get away with it, they get shut down pretty fast.

[01:05:49] **HOWARD:** It seems like most of the leadership have been sort of left-wingers in Local 8, and they've been pretty-much pro-Bridges men, is that a correct statement?

[01:05:59] **JACK:** Well, the majority have been on the what you call—I don't know what they call the left-winger, but the majority have been mostly Bridges men.

Yeah we had a few, you know, where Bridges men and then they turned.

[01:06:21] **HOWARD:** Oh is that right?

[01:06:22] **JACK:** Oh yeah.

[01:06:24] **HOWARD:** Do you remember if they ran separate slates of candidates in the elections, like pro-Bridges slate [or] an anti-Bridges slate? Were they ever that organized?

[01:06:33] **JACK:** Oh yeah.

[01:06:34] **HOWARD:** They were.

[01:06:35] **JACK:** Oh yes. They run a candidate and he was from Local 8. He come out from 'Frisco and transferred up here.

[01:06:53] **HOWARD:** What was his name, do you remember?

[01:06:54] **JACK:** Trying to think of it.

[01:06:55] **HOWARD:** There was a guy that ran against Bridges in the International, Baker?

[01:07:00] **JACK:** Oh, that's Bob Baker.

[01:07:01] **HOWARD:** Yeah, Bob Baker, but I was wondering—

[01:07:02] **JACK:** He was Local 8 too. And the other one was from Local 8 too. He run against Bridges. Can't think of the name now, but will think of it maybe.

[01:07:19] **HOWARD:** Let me ask you a few questions about the factionalism in Local 8. If we look at Local 8 around 1950, and I want to understand who was most likely to support Bridges, what kind of guys would they be? Would they be the older men or the younger men?

[01:07:36] **JACK:** I think it would be both classes.

[01:07:37] **HOWARD:** Both? How about the '34 men? Were they exceptionally loyal to Bridges or were they not?

[01:07:42] **JACK:** Well I can tell you, our hall was for Bridges in '34. We went all out for him, we went all out for his general strike in 'Frisco. Then in 1936, we still didn't—district didn't go—Ryan was still the president of us. That I was in Pedro in convention when Bridges was nominated for district president and we had to divide amongst the delegates. Some voted for Bridges—some supported Bridges and some didn't support him. [inaudible] [Conrad] Negstad he didn't support him. We had a fellow named [?Thurston?] . Thurston didn't support him [Bridges] because he run against him, and a couple more. We had a majority that supported him. I seconded his nomination, and he was elected district president and we had Matt Meehan was running for secretary and Bridges run for president, and Matt Meehan was a Local 8 boy. We had two Local 8 boys running—one against Bridges and one against Matt Meehan. And they both got defeated in the Portland local.

[01:09:17] **HOWARD:** Is that right? That's interesting.

[01:09:22] **JACK:** Well, Baker got defeated in the Portland local too. Bridges carried—

[01:09:26] **HOWARD:** Bridges carried Local 8? That's interesting. Let me ask you again about the situation in the '50s, the early '50s, when you had factionalism forming in the union as a result of the Cold War and everything else, what kind of people were most likely to support Bridges? Were they—you said age didn't make much of a difference, the old and the young folks supported him, is that right?

[01:09:56] **JACK:** Well we had—see, our local come up much different from the other locals. We had it here where if you had a son, he could go down and register on the Waterfront and go on the permit. And they gradually take them in, as their turn comes around. And we had a young generation at that time, a bunch of them was pretty well-educated too. Fathers was telling them what was going on the Waterfront. We'd fight taking the strangers—never worked on the Waterfront, which we did have. Then we had quite a few loggers come in here started working on the Waterfront under permit and 90 percent of those loggers were ex-Wobblies

and so forth. That's why I said, between the young and the old, it didn't make too much difference because the young was pretty well-educated and they were pretty well-educated when they were on permit. Sometimes they had to be on permit for a few years before they get taken in the union.

[01:11:12] **HOWARD:** That is interesting because in Local 10 [San Francisco] they told me the guys told me the old guys were really solid for Bridges, and the new guys were the opposition. So you're saying, because they brought in the kids, the kids were taught the lessons by their dads?

[01:11:22] **JACK:** They probably didn't do that down there. All I can speak for is just what we done here.

[01:11:29] **HOWARD:** Yeah, that's what I want to get is the sense of what each local did. So the young men were equally pro-Bridges?

[01:11:35] **JACK:** Well, I'd say the majority was. You see, they got a lot of training because when they got a permit, they got the same as—when you get a permit, you get the same kind of rules as you do if you belonged to the meetings. You can't go down and knock them off that job or nothing like used to Local 6 do. They got the same pay—everything was the same. And the old-timers talked to them, you know what I mean? Told them about the union and what the benefits was and how much Bridges was in the making of the whole thing. And that's given a whole a lot of information to those young fellows about Bridges before they ever got in the union.

[01:12:27] **HOWARD:** Was the Catholic Church ever involved with politics against the so-called communist menace? Association of Catholics for Trade Unions, or any of those groups?

[01:12:35] **JACK:** Yes and no. That's a hard question to ask when you get into religion.

And we had some good Fathers [Catholic priests] here, and I met with a bunch of them, but then we had some that were just the opposite.

[01:12:56] **HOWARD:** So they were involved in some way, right?

[01:12:58] **JACK:** Oh I think so, yeah. I think they had a right-wing group under their—but we never paid no attention to it.

[01:13:08] **HOWARD:** They weren't too significant?

[01:13:09] **JACK:** No, no.

[01:13:11] **HOWARD:** Was it an actual ACTU organization? Association of Catholic Trade Unionists or—?

[01:13:16] **JACK:** No, no they had some of those reactionary guys that was Catholics and that seemed to give a few instructions. But it didn't do them any good.

[01:13:28] **HOWARD:** Were the Catholics more likely to be anti-Bridges than the non-Catholics or would that be—?



[01:13:33] **JACK:** No, I don't think so. 'Course he's a Catholic himself. I don't think so, I never heard of—well of course, I never belonged to the Catholic Church and my daughter here, they do. But I—oh, there was one Father here, I can't think of his name, but he was very anti-Bridges. But the rest of them that I talked to, they seemed to go along with Bridges very well. Thought Bridges had done a hell of a lot for the people. Not only for the longshoremen, but unemployment and people like that.

[01:14:21] **HOWARD:** Throughout this whole period, were there any open communists here in Local 8 or people that were recognized as close to the Party?

[01:14:29] **JACK:** Oh yeah. Oh yeah.

[01:14:31] **HOWARD:** Just a mere handful, or a little more than that?

[01:14:35] **JACK:** Oh, I couldn't say what the number was.

[01:14:41] **HOWARD:** Were they ever elected to any offices?

[01:14:43] **JACK:** Oh yeah.

[01:14:43] **HOWARD:** They were?

[01:14:46] **JACK:** Well, like me of course, red-baited, but I as a delegate five or six times in the convention, and I was trustee three different times, I was on the Labor Relations four different times.

[01:15:01] **HOWARD:** Were you recognized as a socialist by most the men?

[01:15:04] **JACK:** Oh yeah, they knew I was a radical.

[01:15:06] **HOWARD:** They did? And they still elected you?

[01:15:08] **JACK:** Well I told them. I never was—I never got before the membership and try to tell them some kind of a lie or something, because that's going take them all up. I told them who I was for and if they wanted to vote for me, they'd vote for me, and if they didn't want to that was their right!

[01:15:27] **HOWARD:** Give me an election speech like you're in Local 8. What would it sound like in 1950 or so?

[01:15:33] **JACK:** [chuckles] I don't know that's pretty hard to do to put something to put your finger on.

[01:15:42] **HOWARD:** What would've you said, just generally? I mean I know it's difficult.

[01:15:46] **JACK:** Well, we—if you wanted to run for convention, you had sheets of paper and you had put your name on it and your number, work number. You put your name down and then your work number and then you'd have to have 25 people to sign that to make it legal. Then you get up in the meeting and tell them you're running for delegate or you're running for certain office and you're going down to convention and going to convention and “I'm going to weigh this and I'm going to weigh that way closely and I'm going to go along with

the paths of the International officers.” Because they've done a good job, so forth and so on, tell him what's on your mind and tell him what your policy is and ask him for a vote.

[01:16:43] **HOWARD:** They did talk about policy.

[01:16:45] **JACK:** Oh sure they talked about policy, oh sure.

[01:16:48] **HOWARD:** It wasn't just a personality contest?

[01:16:50] **JACK:** Oh no. No, no you had to have something on the ball to be elected.

[01:16:56] **HOWARD:** I know, I saw—I went through the Francis Murnane [former president of Local] papers, he donated most of his papers to the Oregon Historical Society and I saw your name all over the place. You had to be an official in the union a lot because you were signing all these documents and stuff.

[01:17:10] **JACK:** Oh yes I was a council member of the [?Columbia River Council?] for years. I was a delegate there in Local 8. And then the old time council—the maritime council for a long time, I helped organize that. Delegate there for a long time. And I helped organize the Columbia River District council, Ryan Craycraft [sic; Rosco Craycraft] and a fellow—I can't think of his name. And a fellow—well they're both dead now—fellow by the name of—he was in the Scalars Union [a division of the ILWU] . And I can't think of names anymore, I don't know. I'll be 86 years old.

[01:18:05] **HOWARD:** All you guys are about the same age, Werner is about that age isn't he? Eighty-six, eighty-seven?

[01:18:10] **JACK:** I think Werner is a year older than I am.

[01:18:11] **HOWARD:** Yeah, I think he's 87 and Richardson up there in Seattle is about 87?

[01:18:18] **JACK:** Rosco is young.

[01:18:19] **HOWARD:** Yeah, he's just a baby.

[01:18:21] **JACK:** I saw him play football on the last year he played football.

[01:18:24] **HOWARD:** Is that right?

So, if I wanted to go to Local 8 in 1950, try to pick out the right-wingers, it would've been—it wouldn't have been anything consistent about it, right? It wouldn't have been one group in particular?

[01:18:40] **JACK:** Well, you could tell by the way they talked in the meetings. Bob Baker was a right-winger, you know. And he had a following. And this other Baker that we had was [?Ernie?] Baker, he played both sides of the fence. A regular politician.

[01:19:02] **HOWARD:** Yeah, I heard about him.

[01:19:07] **JACK:** He'd be anti-Bridges to one group to see if he could get their votes, and he'd be great a great Bridges guy in another bunch.

[01:19:16] **HOWARD:** Yeah, a lot of people did that. I guess that's common in politics in this country. Would it be safe to say that the pro-Bridges guys were generally left-wingers and the anti-Bridges guys were generally sort of right-wingers? Or that's simply—

[01:19:29] **JACK:** No, I think—I don't think that you could—the Bridges guys had a lot of guys, but it didn't go either way. Just voted policy.

[01:19:39] **HOWARD:** Okay, so it wasn't so much politics then?

[01:19:42] **JACK:** No, no they voted on policy. They figured if they were going to do them a good job and keep things going—they wanted a union. And they've been driven down and driven down so much, between the strike and everything else. They wanted the union, and they liked the union, and they knew what the union was for. They knew what the union was doing for them. Putting butter on the bread. Making safety for them. Work was much easier and people were getting older and we had a lot of things other ports didn't have. We had an old man's board here. See, what we called an old man's board. You plug in after you hit a certain age, you've been crippled or something—you know what I mean. And they had their own work to do. Nobody else could plug into that board.

[01:20:33] **HOWARD:** Oh I see, easier work, right?

[01:20:34] **JACK:** And that given them a chance, after they got up before '52, before we had a retirement plan was someone of those guys was old then. They could only worked a day or two a week.

[01:20:47] **HOWARD:** Why is there such solidarity and democracy in the ILWU? That they look out for their own men like that—that's incredible to me that they set up systems to share work. Most unions try to do that but then the workers are always fighting each other to get ahead.

[01:21:01] **JACK:** They—I don't know, unless they come out of the hard bumps in '22 and '34. Everybody, even at that time they pushed right here. It seemed like you could get help more or less when the longshoremen was on the job. I don't know, especially Portland here, it always seemed like the local here would help the membership no matter what kind of trouble they got into. See if your house burnt down, or something else, or something, you got into trouble, there was always a donation taken up or something. We had a hard-luck about this, a hard-luck about that and we had some young guys got in the penitentiary, and we got them out there, this and that. And we've always had some good lawyers and doctors years ago that was on the longshoremen side. Made it a whole lot easier.

[01:22:00] **HOWARD:** What's interesting about it is I've been in a couple of unions, I used to do some manual work, and the union was simply something that you paid your dues to and if you had a gripe you'd go talk to them. The longshoremen's union is something very different from that it's almost like a family it seems.

[01:22:16] **JACK:** Oh that's what they say, Oh it seems like somebody—you could always get help. Help somebody, if somebody's in trouble or something.

[01:22:26] **HOWARD:** That's interesting. Let me ask you the big question of the research, how do you think that Bridges, a guy like him who never tried to hide his politics, could stay around as long as he did?

[01:22:34] **JACK:** Well, it's like I said before, he was a leader and his policies always seemed to be always be 90 percent right, and he put more bread and butter on the table than any man that I never knew in a labor organizations to the people who really was out to earn it. He had good contacts and he was a good negotiator. And he just come and tell the membership what is what and whether it was honest or not—that's the way he worked. You get the confidence of all the guys and nationally, if you got the confidence of all the guys up and down the coast, anywhere between 70, 80 percent and you do the right thing, you're going to stay a long time.

[01:23:35] **HOWARD:** Did the men, do you think, see him as a radical? In the labor movement?

[01:23:41] **JACK:** I don't think so.

[01:23:43] **HOWARD:** No?

[01:23:43] **JACK:** No. They seemed to say—take him as a man of his word.

[01:23:50] **HOWARD:** Okay, he had a lot of integrity, I realize that. He delivered the bread and butter. But he was also a political radical, wasn't he?

[01:23:57] **JACK:** Oh, I guess you could call him that.

[01:24:00] **HOWARD:** So I guess the question I'm asking is, is did that hurt him or help him among the men?

[01:24:05] **JACK:** Never hurt him here.

[01:24:06] **HOWARD:** Never hurt him here. Is it possible that some of the men began to share his vision of a different world? You know a socialist future? Something like that?

[01:24:15] **JACK:** No, I think so, I think so. I know after the '34 strike, the Communist Party gained a whole lot here in the state of Oregon on the Waterfront and in the woods. All over.

[01:24:32] **HOWARD:** They did.

[01:24:33] **JACK:** Oh yes. Well, and the laws changed too and they come out more open than before. You had to be hiding in somebody's cellar or something else for meeting.

[01:24:52] **HOWARD:** What do you think of Bridges? Is there anything you want to say?

[01:24:55] **JACK:** Well, he's one of the finest man I ever met. I know Bridges for a long time. Bridges has been to my house about a half dozen times. And my wife used to entertain him when he come to Portland. I like Bridges, very, very, very much. I think Bridges ought to—of course it's a good thing he went out as president, but I think he should have stayed as president if he couldn't get nothing else.

[01:25:32] **HOWARD:** Is that right? You do feel that way?

[01:25:34] **JACK:** Yeah, although I like Jim [Jimmy Herman, ILWU president after Bridges] . I know Jim very well. But he's not the man that Bridges is.

[01:25:42] **HOWARD:** I guess that's what everybody tells me, at some point I have to try to interview him. So you know him personally?

[01:25:48] **JACK:** Oh yes. Oh yes, I knew him before the '34 strike.

[01:25:53] **HOWARD:** Did you guys ever hear about him before the '34 strike? You did? That was unusually I guess.

[01:26:00] **JACK:** Well, I knew a lot of people around 'Frisco—he's not the man that Harry is.

[01:26:11] **HOWARD:** Yeah, but I guess there aren't too many—

[01:26:13] **JACK:** He writes a pretty good article though, his last article on the ILWU was a good one.

[01:26:19] **HOWARD:** I was down in San Francisco doing research and they had a Solidarity Day rally, and Jimmy Herman spoke and he was a very articulate guy, very intelligent. Excellent speaker.

[01:26:30] **JACK:** Well Bridges came up through the rough deal. Went to sea when he was a kid, shipwrecked. The only thing he had when he got out from the beach was his guitar.

[01:26:41] **HOWARD:** Yeah, his mandolin. He said it kept him floating, right?

[01:26:47] **JACK:** [laughs] Bridges, you know, he was a different kind of guy. He came up rugged. See now, he was in New Orleans and having a heck of time down there and of course I guess you know all of this anyway, and got his ship finally, got on the West Coast here and having a helluva good time. Sailing little old schooners up and down. Finally landed in 'Frisco and became famous. Bridges had lots of guts.

[01:27:21] **HOWARD:** How do you explain the difference between the ILA and the ILWU?

[01:27:29] **JACK:** Well it's just like light and dark. ILWU, we had very little to say in the ILWU, I mean in the ILA. Very little to say. This bastard back East, Ryan was the president and he was as crooked as a snake. He came here in the '34 strike and was going to put us fellows back to work. Well he found out something, he was on that air—out of the airport and gone before meetings were ever called. Get the hell out of here, right now.

[01:28:06] **HOWARD:** Well, I think that's all the questions I have, I just wanted to cover that period. I really appreciate it. Okay.

[END PART THREE]